This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

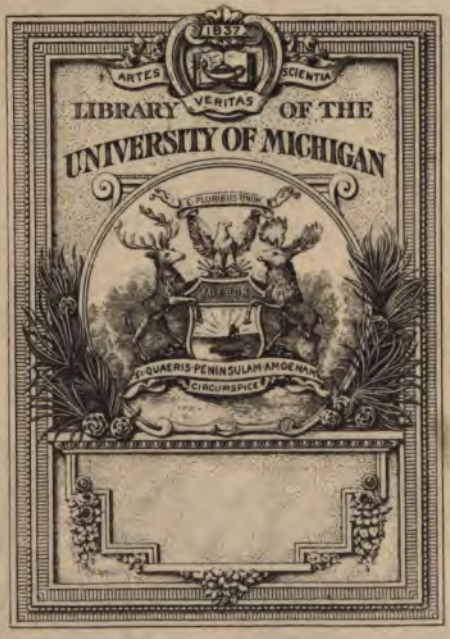
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

BR
325
.B64

A 412142

Boardman
Martin Luther

University of Michigan


1837
ARTES
SCIENTIA
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
E PLURIBUS UNUM
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

MARTIN LUTHER.

A SERMON

SUGGESTED BY THE

Four Hundredth Birthday of Martin Luther:

DELIVERED IN THE MEETING-HOUSE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER 11TH, 1883.

BY

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN,

PASTOR.

PHILADELPHIA:
ALLEN, LANE & SCOTT'S PRINTING HOUSE,
Nos. 229-231 South Fifth Street.
1883.

BR
325
.B64

MARTIN LUTHER.

ire him in the spirit and power of Elias."—Luke I, 17.

: angel Gabriel to the priest Zacharias, as, on the right hand of the altar of incense, he rth of John the Baptist: "Fear not, Zacha- rayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall n, and thou shalt call his name John; he in the sight of the Lord, and shall go be- in the spirit and power of Elijah." I can ore appropriate text on which to base a dis- nemoration of MARTIN LUTHER.

That we may the better appreciate Luther's character and life-work, let us, ke a rapid survey of the age immediately preceding his own; for the Reformation was not a sudden,

With Compliments of the Author.

unaccountable outbreak; it was the natural fruit of many pre-existing conditions.

Glance, first, at the secular outlook. It was, in the first place, an age of radical political changes. Hitherto the European governments had been largely ecclesiastical in form and feudal in details. But now civic considerations were taking the place of churchly, and the old feudalism was being supplanted by towns or burgs, and by vigorous monarchies, which tended to consolidate the different nations. The Third Estate, or the commonalty as represented in parliaments, was everywhere emerging, asserting its peerage with the lords spiritual or mitred clergy, and the lords temporal or the nobility. Again, it was an age of maritime discoveries, giving birth to the international spirit. The discovery of America in the year when Luther was nine years old, and the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope in the year he was fourteen, opened America, Africa, and Asia to Europe, turning over the future of history into the grasp of the commercial nations. Again, it was an age of intense intellectual activity. The recovery of ancient manuscripts; the revived study of the Greek and Roman classics; the decline of Scholasticism with its narrowing subtleties; the emergence of Humanism with its broadening tendencies; the rise of the great universities; the cultivation

of the æsthetic arts by a Dante, a Da Vinci, a Raphael, an Angelo; very especially the invention of the art of printing:—All this tended to emancipate the intellect of Europe, quickening its energies, broadening its scope, and uplifting its aims. Such was the secular or external preparation for the great Reformation.

And now glance for a moment at the moral outlook.

On the one hand, it was an age of profound religious corruption. And here let us be just. Of all men Christians can afford to be and ought to be the fairest. Accordingly, you will allow me to say that Protestants, I suspect, too seldom realize how vast is the debt we owe to the Church of Rome, and this in many ways. We owe her our gratitude, for instance, for her custody of the sacred archives through the long period of the Dark Ages; for her rich contributions to sacred art, pictorial, architectural, poetical, and musical; for her instruction in Christian ethics and Christian theology; for the saintliness of unnumbered thousands of her heroes and heroines. Taking into account the fact that the Romanists have swayed Christendom for an immensely longer period than have the Protestants, I think that we must in justice admit that, so far as human vision goes, we owe to the Roman Church, or rather to individuals of her communion, vastly more than to any

other single human institution, or even all other churches besides. Nevertheless, while it is but just to say this, it is also but just to say that the Roman Church has been, and still is, a corrupt church. And never was the corruption deeper than in the age preceding Luther's. The remark is especially true of the hierarchy. It was an age of sacerdotal arrogance, rapacious extortion, systematic simony, unblushing nepotism, ruthless inquisition, and hierarchical profligacy. In brief, the Papacy had become a secular, almost Anti-Christian power.

On the other hand, it was also an age of spiritual unrest and yearning. Throughout Christendom there was a growing demand for what was called "reform in head and members." Already there were reformers before the Reformation: notably John Huss of Bohemia, and John Wycliffe of England; the former born a century and the latter a century and a half before Martin Luther. But brave as these reformers and others like them were, it was their mission to sow the seed rather than to reap the harvest of the Reformation. As time rolled on, the discontent with the pretensions and worldliness of the Papacy, and the yearning for a purified church, grew more and more general and intense. At length, near the opening of the sixteenth century, the reformatory movement, especially in Germany, had

gained such distinctness of conception and force of momentum, that it was ready to take on definite organization, and march to victory. All that it needed was a leader. That leader was Martin Luther.

Outline of Luther's Career.

Having thus swiftly glanced at the period preceding the Reformation, let us now glance with equal swiftness at the career of the great Reformer himself. Nor is it easy, as you can readily believe, to condense into a few moments the story of sixty-three years—a story compact with stirring events and majestic conceptions.

Born of humble parentage, in the mining town of Eisleben, Saxony, November 10th, 1483; scrupulously trained by affectionate but austere parents; attending preparatory schools at Mansfeld, Magdeburg, and Eisenach; earning his bread by singing in the streets and in the cathedral choir; studying law at the University of Erfurt; taking the bachelor's degree at the age of twenty; incidentally discovering in the library an unabridged copy of the Latin Bible, it being the first time in his life that he had taken the sacred volume in his hands, and reading it with intense curiosity; suddenly abandoning the study of law, and entering the Augustine Convent of Erfurt; ordained a Roman Catholic priest; dis-

tressed almost to the verge of delirium by doubts concerning his own personal salvation; inflicting on himself extraordinary vigils and penances and austerities; brought somewhat into the light by an aged brother monk, who repeated to him one day the article in the Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins"; lifted out of his despondency by the judicious counsels of his superior, John Staupitz, the provincial of the Augustines for Germany; abandoning himself to the enthusiastic study of theology, particularly the works of Augustine, whose name he had, as it were, prophetically assumed on entering the cloister; called to the chair of philosophy in the newly-founded University of Wittenberg; making a pilgrimage to Rome in the interests of his order, and, as the eternal city rose before his eyes, falling on his knees, and fervently exclaiming: "Hail, sacred Rome! Thrice hallowed with the blood of martyrs"—returning to Wittenberg, and made a doctor of theology at the age of twenty-nine; undergoing rich spiritual experiences, and therefore gaining clearer insight into the doctrines of grace, but still not having the slightest suspicion that he was breaking with Rome; profoundly studying the Scriptures, and preaching powerful expository sermons; denouncing the sale of papal indulgences by the notorious Dominican friar, John Tetzel; unconsciously sounding the

tocsin of the Reformation by publicly posting on All-Saints' day, October 31st, 1517, his famous ninety-five theses against the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg; bravely holding his own against the successive assaults of Sylvester Prierias, and John Tetzel, and John Eck, and Thomas de Vio; "appealing from the Pope ill-informed to the Pope better-informed," and from the Pope himself to a General Council; publishing his "Address to the Christian Nobles of the German Nation," his treatise on the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church," and his sermon on "The Freedom of a Christian Man"; denying the doctrines of transubstantiation, sacrifice of the mass, baptismal regeneration, the authority of the Pope in secular affairs, the essential distinction between priesthood and laity, compulsory celibacy, and prescribed austerities; excommunicated by Leo X., and publicly burning the bull of excommunication December 20th, 1520; summoned by Charles V. to appear and answer for himself at the Diet of Worms; warned by friends that obedience to the summons might subject him to the martyr's fate; stoutly answering, "Huss was burned, but not the truth with him; I will go into Worms, though as many devils were aiming at me as there are tiles on the roofs"; standing up, almost alone, pale with recent illness and hard study, in the presence of

five thousand persons, including the great emperor, his brother the archduke, six electors, twenty-four dukes, eight margraves, thirty bishops, and a brilliant array of German and foreign dignitaries, robed in velvet and ermine, violet and crimson; "an empire against one man, a second Prometheus, confronting the Jove of the sixteenth century and the German Olympus;" urged to recant, and memorably replying, "I shall not be convinced, except by the testimony of the Scriptures, or plain reason; for I believe neither the pope nor councils alone, since it is manifest that they have often erred and contradicted themselves; I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted, and my conscience is held captive by the word of God; and as it is neither safe nor honest to act against conscience, I can not and will not retract anything; here I stand; I can not otherwise; God help me; Amen (*Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders; Gott helfe mir; Amen*);" placed under the imperial and pontifical ban; convoyed for protection, under the friendly guise of a prisoner, to the secluded castle of Wartburg, which he called his Patmos; devoting the leisure of his exile to the preparation of what was really the greatest and most permanent factor of the Reformation, his translation of the Bible into German; leaving the seclusion of Wartburg to quell the fanatical disorders which had sprung

up in Wittenberg; developing a tremendous mental and practical activity, reorganizing the Saxon Church, formulating a new liturgy, establishing schools, providing new text-books, keeping up an extensive correspondence with scholars and princes on the most important subjects, putting forth in a single year not less than one hundred and eighty-three publications; laying aside his monastic dress, and marrying the nun Catharine von Bora; battling with Henry VIII. of England, with Erasmus, and with Zwingle; advising against the proposed resort to armed resistance; watching and contributing to the formulation of Protestant doctrines, as set forth in the Augsburg Confession; drawing up the Smalcald Articles; spending his last days in endeavoring to reconcile the counts of Mansfeld; dying in the peace of the gospel at Eisleben, his birthplace, February 18th, 1546:—These are some of the incidents which make the personality of MARTIN LUTHER one of the most striking of history's dramatic figures.

Outline of Luther's Character.

And now we pass to a swift survey of Luther's character. Like that of all great men, it was composite, blending extraordinary forces with petty weaknesses.

And first a word as to his personal appearance. Although of rather low stature, he was well-set, having a fresh com-

plexion, handsome face, lustrous eyes, and a rich tenor voice. His life was largely one of bodily suffering, the rotundness of his later years being, it is said, the result of his early austerities.

His intellectual character was richly varied. He was strong in natural endowments; sedulous in cultivating his native gifts; versed in theological lore; sturdy in sense; conservative in instincts; broad in comprehension; subtile in vision; affluent in imagination; passionate in his love of nature and poetry and music; swift in mental movement; versatile in expedients; keen in repartee; rollicking in humor; merciless in debate; masterly in the use of his vernacular; in brief, Titanic in his mental make-up.

Nor was his social nature less richly endowed than his mental. Never was there a man fonder of society and friends and home than Martin Luther. It is really refreshing to see this brawny, sometimes seemingly coarse-grained giant, coming forth from some stormy encounter in castle or church or diet, where he had fought breast to breast, almost to the point of death, with sceptred prince and mitred bishop and ermined cardinal, and hastening homewards to caress his beloved Catharine or "Mrs. Doctoress Luther," as he quaintly styled her, and romp with his children, and frolic with his dog Fido, and sing his lark-like songs, and

hold love-feasts with his dear Philip Melancthon, and give back for the Oliver of some flashing witticism of Erasmus the Roland of some inimitable drollery of his own. A delightful transformation this—the devouring lion of the jungle suddenly becoming the gamboling lamb of the pasture.

But it is in the range of the moral nature that Martin Luther was the greatest.

Not that he was faultless, far from it; his faults were conspicuous. He was impetuous, irritable, aggressive, imperious, violent, vituperative, even coarse. These faults sprang partly from the violence of his times, partly from the intensity of his own convictions, partly, and indeed chiefly, from the peculiar kind of work which he felt he had been summoned to do. That work was a work of down-pulling, or at least purgation. Gibraltars of petrified error are not taken by velvet impacts; Augean stables of centuries of corruption are not cleansed with gossamer wisps. It was a sudden hand to hand, deadly fight; and padded gloves were out of the question.

But Luther's faults, however many or marked, lay on the surface, and were immeasurably overbalanced by his excellences. Sincere, straightforward, outspoken, he was in an eminent sense "the honest German." Endowed with a pro-

found moral nature, he was intense in his convictions, high and broad in his aims, conscientious in his methods, tireless in his activities, aggressive in his movements, conservative in his instincts, courageous in his assaults, indomitable in his will, confident in his success, prayerful in his self-distrust, childlike in his faith, humble in his triumphs, heroic in his defeats. It was the very intensity of his convictions which, on the one hand, led him to flee before superstitious hallucinations; and, on the other hand, to beard the devil in his own lair. In brief, Luther, like John the Baptist, went before the Christ in the spirit and power of Elijah. Glance for a moment at the parallels between the three. Their moral environments were alike: Worship of Baal in the court of Ahab, worship of form in the court of Herod, worship of power in the court of Leo. Their mission was alike: Each was a voice in the wilderness, crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God, exalt every valley, lay low every mountain, straighten every crooked path, make smooth every rough place; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and the word of our God shall stand forever. Their method was alike: Turning the hearts of the children to the fathers, purifying the sons of Levi, laying the axe at

the root of the tree, preaching the baptism of repentance, that is, reform. Their spirit was alike: The tragic oratory of wrath and tornado and conflagration and earthquake. Their sorrows were alike: Elijah in the cave of Horeb, John in the prison of Machærus, Luther in the castle of Wartburg. In view of these parallels, you will admit the appropriateness of my text: "He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah." Melancthon himself seems to have caught the spirit of the parallel; for, when the news of Luther's death was brought to him, he repeated to his students the very words which Elisha had uttered on beholding the ascension of Elijah: "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!"

Outline of Luther's Mission.

Having thus glanced at Luther's career and character, let us now survey a little more in detail his mission and work. It was manifold.

First, it was Luther's mission to emancipate the Bible. For, practically speaking, the Bible had been for centuries an imprisoned book. Luther's recovery of it, like King Josiah's recovery of the Pentateuch which had been lost for centuries, was a startling event. His translation of it into matchless German (a version which has won the highest praise even from Roman Catholic writers),

laid the foundation for the reformed theology, ethics, and polity. Hitherto, through the mediæval period, the canon of doctrine and the rule of life had been the decrees of councils and the decretals of popes: henceforth the one supreme authority in these transcendent matters was the Word of God.

Again: It was Luther's mission to emancipate doctrine. For the Scriptural theology had become well-nigh lost in the perversions and traditions and excrescences of ecclesiastical deliverances. Not that Luther was eminent as a theologian; the systematizing faculty was not his forte. But while Melancthon arranged and Calvin constructed, Luther brought the blocks, or rather by removing the overlying rubbish of centuries, he showed where the divine quarry lay. His restoration of the apostolic theology has its most signal illustration in his recovery of the doctrine of Justification by Faith. We are all so familiar with this "article of the standing or the falling church" (*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*), that I need not dwell on it. Nevertheless, let me seize the occasion to say that Luther pushed this momentous doctrine to an extreme, or rather he overlooked the complementary doctrine which is needed to keep it in balance. Perceiving that this doctrine of justification by works alone was the pivotal point in his battle

with the corrupted theology of the day, he naturally concentrated all his forces at this crucial point, squarely pitting himself against the doctrine of justification by works. Accordingly, he spoke slightingly of the epistle of James, calling it "a chaffy epistle." And we Protestants have largely inherited to this day Luther's one-sided view of the great doctrine of justification by faith. Nor do we have his excuse: for he was engaged in deadly battle, and had not time to scan the whole horizon. The truth is, the theological epistle of Paul to the Romans is not more authoritative or essential than the practical epistle of James. While it is by faith that we are justified before God, it is by works that we are justified before men. Nevertheless, Luther's recovery of the doctrine of justification by faith from the tomb of the mediæval theology was like a resurrection of the dead.

Again: It was Luther's mission to emancipate conscience. It was one of the many baneful fruits of the middle-age theology that it captured the individual conscience, turning it over to the custody of the church, appointing the priest its jailer. Luther it was who opened the prison doors. The spirit of that Lord, before whose face he went forth in the power of Elijah, was upon him; and so he proclaimed deliverance to the captives, setting

at liberty the oppressed, announcing the acceptable year of the Lord, even the jubilee of our God. Trained in the bitter school of a personal struggle and personal victory, he issued forth from the cloister of Erfurt the asserter of an individual conscience, the champion of a personal morality. And if our excellent friends of the Roman Catholic Church enjoy to-day, in this Protestant land of their adoption, the privilege of building their own sanctuaries, and having their own clergy, and worshiping God according to their own consciences, with none to molest or make afraid, it is because this same Martin Luther, whom their own pope excommunicated as a heretic, but whose triumph no papal bull could avert, taught and maintained the protestant apostolic doctrine of personal conscience, and so of personal freedom.

Again: It was Luther's mission to emancipate the laity. For centuries they had been virtually taught to believe that no layman could approach God, except through the mediation of a priest, and, therefore, that the distinction between layman and priest was a distinction in essence as well as in form, a distinction on which the whole hierarchical system of Rome rests. But Luther, remembering how he himself in his own bitterness of soul had come directly to God without any intervention save that of the one

Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, and had found peace in believing, struck a Titan blow at the distinction between priest and layman, declaring that the veil of the temple was still rent in twain, and that all believers, whether ministers or laymen, men or women, adults or children, were alike priests before God, having equal right of entrance into heaven's holy of holies.

Again: It was Luther's mission to emancipate worship. The prescribed liturgy of the church was in Latin, a form of speech which in many countries was already a dead language, and therefore unintelligible. Luther provided a liturgy in the mother-tongue, with his wonted clear sense expressly declaring that it should ever be pliable to circumstances. He also made special provision for the public reading of the Bible, preaching or expounding, and congregational singing. Himself both poet and musician, Luther was the father of the modern hymnology and psalmody, giving the people an opportunity to worship God for themselves and in their own vernacular, and thus resuscitating worship from the tomb of a dead language.

Once more, and comprehensively: It was Luther's mission to emancipate the latent, imprisoned convictions and yearnings of awaking Christendom. He was both the child and the sire of his epoch. For he lived in a great era, and

was just enough greater than his age to be able to interpret the great Christian heart, longing to achieve, it knew not how, a reformation, or rather a return to the purity of apostolic doctrine and life. And in organizing and guiding this return, his moderation was as marked as his dash. For it is a great mistake to conceive Luther as a reckless reformer or wandering iconoclast, bent on nothing but destroying. In respect to what was merely speculative or rubrical or incidental, he was too intensely practical, and even traditional in his tendencies, to be a general iconoclast, saying with characteristic quaintness, "I am never for throwing away the old shoes till I have got new ones." In fact, it was this very moderation, born of his naturally conservative instincts, which saddened his later years, as in the painful affair of Carlstadt. While fighting most uncompromisingly and to the very death every doctrinal and practical error of the Roman Catholic Church, he still believed that this church was the lawful heir of the apostolic, and so in respect to all that was incidental, or kept the impress of the apostolic original, he to the very last clung to the church of his fathers. Nevertheless, surveying his mission as a whole, it was a mission of reformation, and so of destruction. Luther's true symbol, like that of his reforming prototypes John and Elijah, is the axe; he will be ever-

more famous as the lifter-up of the axe in the thicket of the forest. And for this special mission he was, as we have seen, by nature, by training, and by circumstances, specially fitted. No man ever illustrated more finely the poet's saying:—

> "Great offices will have
> Great talents, and God gives to every man
> The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
> That lifts him into life, and lets him fall,
> Just in the niche he was ordained to fill."—*Task.*

Fit then is it for us American Protestants to celebrate Martin Luther's four hundredth birthday. For, though Luther, in the whole make-up of his structure—mental, æsthetic, and moral—was the type of the German character, the ideal of the Teutonic hero, yet Luther was greater than Germany. Martin Luther, historically surveyed, is one of the prime factors in the development of the race; for he it was who, by the grace of God, his own genius, and his transcendent piety, discovered and clarified colossal truths lost in haze or buried in oblivion; emancipating the intellect and conscience of the Church, re-asserting the absolute supremacy of the Bible in all matters of faith, restoring the sole headship of Jesus Christ, manumitting

the laity, guiding with a strong and skillful hand the swollen, turbulent river of new conceptions bursting forth from the glacier-caverns of the long mediæval winter in the spring-freshet of the Reformation; in brief, steering the well-nigh shipwrecked Church of God back to her apostolic moorings. What Hercules was to Greece, or Brutus to Rome, or Arthur to England, or Washington to America, or Moses to Israel; that Luther was to Christendom.

Reviewing then the times, the career, the character, the mission, and the triumph of Martin Luther, we may apply to him the laureate's words in his portrayal of the ideal citizen :—

"A life of civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

"Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming, when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth,
And roll it in another course,

"With thousand shocks that come and go,
With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro."—*In Memoriam; CXII.*

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.

If there is any one production of Luther more characteristic of him than another, it is his famous hymn beginning

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.

It is based on the forty-sixth Psalm, beginning with the words: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

It has been called the "Marseillaise of the Reformation," and is still the national hymn of Protestant Germany.†

* It was Luther's favorite psalm. Living in troublous times, his noble but timid friend Melancthon would sometimes sink in despondency, and then the stalwart Reformer would cheerily say, "Come, Philip, let us sing the forty-sixth Psalm."

† "Quickly, as if angels had been the carriers, the hymn spread throughout Germany and other countries. In 1532 it was sung in the church of Schweinfurth in Bavaria, against the will of the Romish priest, and the children sang it in the streets at night, whereupon the Reformation was soon established in that town. After Luther's death, when Wittenberg fell into the enemy's hand in 1547, and Melancthon, Jonas, and Creutziger, the chief Lutheran divines, had to flee sorrowfully to Weimar, they heard, as they entered the town, this hymn sung by a girl, which greatly comforted them; and Melancthon said to the child, 'Sing, my dear daughter, sing; you know not what great people you are now comforting.' When the Elector Count Frederic III. of the Palatinate was asked why he did not build fortresses in his land he replied:—

'A sure stronghold our God is He;
A trusty shield and weapon.'

The pious King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden ordered this hymn to be sung by his whole army before the battle of Leipsic, September 17th, 1631, and when he had obtained the victory he fell on his knees, praising God, and exclaiming in the words of the second

The hymn has been translated into English by Thomas Carlyle, Frederic H. Hedge, Henry W. Longfellow, Gerald Massie, Catharine Winkworth, and many others. Remembering Luther's fondness for children, I have had Dr. Hedge's translation printed on a slip, and will now ask the children of our two Sunday-schools to sing it to the noble tune which Martin Luther himself composed:—

---

verse, ''Tis He must win the battle.' When the evangelical Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt was banished by the emperor Charles V., and his land given to another, he mounted his horse, rode through the town of Bernburg, and sang as a farewell in the market place with a loud voice the last five lines of the fourth verse:—

'E'en should they take our life,' &c.

When the Elector John Frederic of Saxony, in his prison at Augsburg, heard that the evangelical ministers of that town had been deposed and banished by the emperor, he wept aloud, and after some time asked them, 'Has the emperor banished you from the whole empire?' 'Yes,' they replied. 'Has he also banished you from heaven?' 'No.' 'Oh!' he continued, 'then fear nothing:—

God's kingdom ours abideth.'

The poor Protestant emigrants from Salsburg and other parts of Austria used often to sing this hymn on their way into exile, and the Huguenots did the same in France in the time of their bloody persecutions, between 1560 and 1572; yea, many of them died joyfully as martyrs with this hymn on their lips. Through Meyerbeer's opera, 'The Huguenots,' this hymn with its tune has even been introduced on the stage."—*Historical Notes to the Lyra Germanica, pages 146–149.* It is also introduced by Mendelssohn into his "Hymn of Praise." It was often chanted by the Prussian regiments in the Franco-German war of 1870. During the Diet of Augsburg, Luther himself, while residing at the castle of Coburg, used to sing it daily with his fine voice, standing by the window and looking toward heaven. The first line of the hymn is inscribed on the front of Luther's noble monument at Wittenburg.

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth is his name,
From age to age the same,
And he must win the battle.

"And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,—
One little word shall fell him.